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THE UPSET IN OUR SOCIAL ORDER

(VARNASRAMA VIPLABA)

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Shri Shri Ma Anandamayee Ashram

BY
SRI SITARAMDAS OMKARNATH
(Ramasram)

TRANSLATED BY
S. SIL.

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First Edition :—
April, 51.

Published by :—
B. K. Chatterjee.
Jai Guru Sampradaya.
Sree-Ramashrama.
Dumurdaha, Hooghly.

Printers :—
D. B. Ghose.
Karmi Sangha Press, Kalna.

To be had of :—
Sri Ramashrama,
P. O. Dumurdaha, Hooghly.

Devajan Karyalaya,
P. O. Magra, Hooghly.

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Price -/10/-

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

Sri Sitaramdas Omkarnath has, in the following pages, drawn pointed attention to the social upset that has overtaken us, and he has aptly said that we have been the worse for our indifference to the guiding principles of Hinduism. We have broken away from our ancient moorings and the consequences of that action are that we are now, more than ever, being driven along the Devil's track to inevitable doom.

The Thakur's beckonings are inspired by love and we hope they will not fail to act upon the minds of men. The Thakur reassures us that the lowering clouds are only a pass event.

February, 1951. **S. Sil.**

PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

The entire cost of producing this book has been donated by Sri Aditya Kumar De of Mirhat, P. O. Baidyapur, Dt. Burdwan. He is an earnest devotee of our Thakur, a pious and God-fearing soul, a seeker of Truth, a light upon the ways of his neighbours.

SHREE SHREE SITARAMDAS OMKARNATH

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THE UPSET IN
Our Social Order.

In the Indian sky the caste system shone for ages like the sun and thus shining, it shed its lustre over Hindudom. But in recent times the clouds of Western culture have come rolling through the sky to hide the sun and its lustre. The halfbelievers are upset over all this and see nothing but gloom. But those who are deeply settled in their faith in God and his Shastras regard the clouds as only a passing event. For they know that such clouds have come and gone in the past. The clouds have of course burst and created inundations and they have carried away thousands of men. And this is still the case. God save the victims.

Westernised men proclaim from housetops that Hindu Scriptures and Hindu caste system are like a clog in the wheel of progress. And that is why I feel impelled to give an exposition of India's Religion and her Shastras. Why is India the foremost among all the countries in the world ? This land—India—is indeed the most blessed spot on the earth. She wears on her brow the splended wreath of the Himalayas, and the ocean on the south clasps a girdle round her. India is, as she ever was, the seat of action for whoever longs for heaven and salvation. Elsewhere you cannot have holy rites such as Yagna. One has to pass through thousands of births before one can be born in India. And blessed are those who are born on the holy soil of India. And the gods are full of praise for this land India.

So we see that India is the best part of the world because she offers salvation and heaven. Whereever else you may go,

you cannot find the like of our Yagna; nor can you find a belief in the world beyond. What you find there is only an emphasis on earthly life and its pleasures and comforts. And there are even places where God is laughed away. So India is marked by two things. Heaven and Salvation

One may argue :—"Where is the proof that these two are existent? Who says that they exist ?"

The answer inevitably is that the Vedas have shown the path to heaven and salvation.

One may say that he does not believe in the Vedas, that he won't read the Vedas and to him my answer is that if he won't believe in the Vedas, he is not an Aryan. If he won't read the Vedas, he is as good as dumb.

And why ?

Because, every race has a prime docu-

ment, a prime truth and a prime author. You have to express your thoughts in language and you refer to the sun and the moon and the stars in language. That language again is produced by various combinations of fifty letters of the alphabet, in our case.

"Jal" (water), consists in Bengali of two letters, and these two combine to mean water which quenches our thirst. Every word is a sound and every sound has meaning. The letters are called immutable. because they don't die, nor do they suffer changes. And behind these changeless, deathless letters there is a conscious Being who said "A" is "A" and B is "B" and who called the sky the sky and the wind the wind.

So you see it would be absurd for one to say that one does not want the Vedas. He then would go without language ; that is to say, he would be dumb.

One may assert that he would express

his thoughts in another language.

But whatever the language, you must accept its letters and their prime author. Other races have each its own prime document, even as we have our Vedas.

There is a prime truth, then, at the bottom of every race. It is too deep to be dismissed. If we cast aside our Vedas and run after other people's prime theses, we cease to be Aryans and we cannot in fairness enter into an examination of Aryan points of view. If you say, "I accept a part of the views", you get from the Vedas as much as you accept. The views, like the magic tree, bestows upon us exactly so much as we sincerely want.

This treatise is meant for those who accept the Vedas. It is meant to help them discover the truth. How were the letters created ? Thus says the Rig Veda.

"Gauri Miyaya Salilani,
Takshati Ekapadi Dwipadi Sa Chatuspadi
Astapadi Nabapadi Babhubasi.
Sahasrakshara Parame Byoman

At the beginning of creation, the goddess of speech produced letters and words and sentences and thus created endless varieties of sounds. She bloomed out of Brahma as the Single "OM". And from that "OM" she became two distinct entities. Then she flowered into the four Vedas and into the puranas and the philosophies and sciences. And finally she emerged, full of all letters and sounds and languages, from the placid bosom of the Eternal Soul. (see "Vichar Chandrodaya" by Ramdayal Muzumder).

Thus the voice of the Vedas pointed us to the deathless Ultimate—the immutable essence behind the manifest Universe The radiant goddess of speech released the letters and sounds from her own bosom—the cosmic "OM", and so came the manifest Universe.

Now, what is this ultimate essence ? And why this manifest world ?

The masters say that the Vedas consist of three sections : Karmakanda, Gnan-

kanda and Upasanakanda. The first "kanda" deals with sacrificial rites; so that man may with their help ascend to Heaven, though he must come down to the earth when the fruit of Yagna has been consumed. Such rites therefore, cannot confer immunity from birth and death. The pleasure-loving creatures pass from whirlpool to whirlpool, and for all that labour, they cannot get away from the cycle. But the "Panchadasi Tattwa Vidya says that as the result of good activities man may be raised by the merciful Guru out of the whirlpool and put ashore under the cosy shade of trees. And he may get his guidance from the Master of Tattwa and attain emancipation through a rejection of material values.

The front-rank seekers swiftly lose themselves in the bosom of the Absolute and so comes their salvation. Unto them Brahmavidya is imparted.

The second-rank seekers worship Hiranyagarbha and other qualified concepts

and they desire to reach salvation step by step. For them is prescribed Pranvidya.

The last-rank seekers are so called because they want neither direct salvation nor salvation by stages. They want wealth and plenty and heaven. And for them is prescribed the Samhita forms of worship.

The third category through their prescribed ritual d', of course, attain to the Sattwik stage of rifinement and thus qualify for a selfless performance of sacrificial rites. And so they climb up the scale until they become top-rankers. They realise that God outside whom nothing exists, and having realised God they earn their salvation.

The Vedas speak of that Ultimate Being in this way :

"SAHASRA SIRSA PURUSA
SAHABRAKSHA SAHASRAPAT
SA VUMIM SARBATOBRITWA
TISTHATI DASANGULAM."

That Supreme Being has countless heads and countless eyes and countless legs. He is the Supreme integration of all conscious

impulses residing in the motley mass of living creatures. And therefore all their heads and all their eyes and all their legs belong, in a vital sense, to that integral conscious entity—the Supreme Being. He pervades all time and space and He exists beyond time and space. He is both Immanant and Transcendent.

Brihat eha Tad Divyam Achintyarupam
Sukshmat cha Tat Sukshmatram Bivati
Durat Suduray Tadihantikay Cha
Pasyat Swihaiba Nihitam Guhayam
(Mundakopanishad)

This Brahma is vast and effulgent and beyond conception. It is finer than the finest. And yet it shines through the sun and the moon and the stars. To the coarser eye it is farther than the farthest. But to the enlightened vision it is present in this very mass of flesh and blood. The spiritually exalted mind will find it residing in the deeps of the intellect.

That Brahma has four dimensions, and one dimension holds all the worlds.

Na Tatra Surjo Vati Na Chandra Tarakam
Nema Bidynto Vanti Kutoyam Agni
Tameba Vantam Anuvanti Sarbam
Tasya Vasa Sarbam Idam Bivati

In that Brahma shines not the sun, nor the moon, nor the stars nor does the lightnings flash, not to speak of this fire. But all things shine because the Brahma shines, and its own radiance comes and sets all things aglow.

No one can express what it is like. It is changeless and without form and name. It is infinite and eternal. And he, who know that it resides in the deeps of his intellect, does taste all the pleasures with the all-knowing Brahma.

Why the Universe came into being is thus explained in the Vedas :

Brahma desired to manifest itself in myriad names and forms. And so it went

deep into penance, and then created all these things and went in to reside in them all. It became all things expressed and unexpressed. It became things that abide and things that don't It became all the veritics and all their antitheses. And since Brahma itself became all these, they cannot be called phantoms.

"Jato Ba Imani Bhutani Jayantay. Jena Jatani Jibanti, Jat Prajantya Avisambisanti Tad Bijijnasaswa Tad Brahmeti". Develop a desire to know that which is the source of all life and which sustains all life and which, again, absorbs it when it melts. That is Brahma.

What do we gain by knowing Brahma? "Brahma bid Brahmaiba Bhabati." The knower of Brahma merges in Brahma.

How is it like?

When there is no manifest universe, Brahma is pure and absolute and free. And when the universe becomes manifest,

Brahma is the soul behind matter, the omniscient lord, of creation—the cause of all effects.

"Sarban Hi Etad Brahma. Ayamatma Brahma". All that we see is Brahma. And the Soul is Brahma.

And this soul within me is finer than the finest grains of corn. And at the same time, it is bigger than the earth and the sky, and wider than all the worlds. [Brihadaranayaka Upanishad].

What is its function ?

Its laws keep the sun where it is and make the moon move along its path. Its laws keep order in the solar world, as in all other worlds. And its laws make the day follow the night, and the months, under them, roll into years and the seasons rotate in a cycle.

Man must realise this Brahma, for without that realisation all his offerings at the sacrifice and all his penance through th

years and bound to produce impermanent effects.

And he who leaves this world without that realisation is a great loser, whereas the man who has known Brahma before he dies is a Brahmin.

What I say here is all from the Vedas, and it is now clear that there is a power behind our lives, a mind behind our minds, an all-seeing eye behind our eyes. So long as we do not reach that supreme spirit, so long must we suffer privations. We must seek in earnest that haven of peace, if we are to overcome recurring birth and death and the sorrow inherent in them. The river falls into the sea and loses its name and nature. Until we can, like the river, lose ourselves in the infinite ocean of Brahma, we must inevitably pass through fire and pain. Man is born to strive for a direct realisation of Brahma. If he is blind to that ideal and eager only for temporal pleasures, he must go down in the scale of

beings. he must rise above those pleasures in order to know Brahma.

Brahma then must be known, And so its active counter part the goddess of speech—came forward to see that we might move through our daily duties towords it. She bloomed into the single "OM" and then broke out into two aspects : Byahriti and Savitri, and then again into four : the Vedas, and finally into eight : Ethics and History and Grammar and Astrology and Kalpa and Nirukta, and, of course, purana and Shastra.

She revealed the Vedas to Brahmah while he was in a trance She appeared as purana and Shastra in the minds of sages such as Manu, Atri, Parasar, Gautama, Vyasa, Vasista and so on.

These sages were not the originators of Shastras. These were revealed to them. And so they spoke out all the ordinances about the division of society into four castes. And all our ritual prescriptions came from the sages.

And the path they showed was such that one might glide along, full of thrill, towards that Absolute Soul.

Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas have combined to create the whole animal world. When Sattwa preponderates in man, he is to move towards the Soul along the path of renunciation. When Rajas preponderates, he is to move along the road of self-fulfilment. And those who are full of Tamas take neither of these roads and behave blatantly for self-dissipation.

The Shastras inculcate Renunciation. And all good dicta are those that insist on renunciation. It would be monstrous to insist that temporal pleasures are life's supreme objective.

Men full of Rajas may ascend to heaven through religious activity, but they must descend again to the earth ; and this process will continue until their Sattwa preponderates and puts them on the road of Renunciation. And for the man of

Renunciation was prescribed this course.

Adau Swabarna srama Barnita Kriya
Kritwa Samasadita Swddha manasa
Samapya Tat Mupattasaihana
Samasrayet Sudgurum Atmalabdhayay.

He should selflessly go through religious duties pertaining to his caste and Ashrama in order to reach purification of mind. When that is reached, he should find a competent Guru for selfrealisation.

With that Guru as his guide he should enter upon the four kinds of Sadhana and earn the six qualities such as Sam, Dam and so on. That gives him the right to cultivate Illusionist theories, and he may that way seek the absolute and rise above the shackles of the world.

The four castes were prescribed for, both as regards religion and livelihood.

"Iswararadhanantu Sarbesam Barnanam
Ashramanancha Sadharano Dharma."

Prayer is the common religion for all the castes in all their stages.

"Ahimsa Satyam Asteyam Saucham
Indriya Nigraha
Etat Samasikam Dharmam Sarbabarnay
Abrabit Manu."

Non-violence, truthfulness, absence of avatice, cleanliness and sublimation of sensual activity are the common religion of all the castes.

"Samo Damastapa Saucham Kshanti
Arjabam Eba Cha
Jnanam Vijnanam Astikyam Brahma
Karam, Swabhabajam."

The Brahmin's natural functions are : Concentration sensual control, austerity cleanliness. forgiveness, simplicity, knowledge, intellection and an acceptance of God.

The special functions of the Brahmin are : Study of Shastras, worship of God and charity. And his means of livelihood are : teaching, priesthood and acceptance of gifts

"Saurjam Tejo Dhritir Dakshyam
Yuddhay Chapi Apalayanam
Danam Iswarabhabascha Kshatram
Karma Swabhabajam."

The Kshatriya must show : valour, might, patience, skill, bravery in the field, charity and God-mindedness.

His religion consists of study and worship and charity. And he must live by protecting the people. The Trading class has the same religion, and its means of livelihood are agriculture, trade and cow-keeping.

The Sudra's religion is to serve the upper castes and that is also their means of livelihood.

And there are some mixed castes in between. Some of them have the sacred thread and may for that reason follow the religion of the upper three classes. The Ambastha (offspring of Brahmin male and Baisya female) is to practise medicine, and the Murdhabhisikta (offspring of

Brahmin male and Kshatriya female) is to follow the avocation of his grandfather on the maternal side.

The castes known as "Sankirna" are to follow the religion of the Sudras. The Suta and other such "Sankirna" castes work as charioteers. And some such castes earn their bread as fiishermen.

Men are either born of one or other of the castes ; or they may be born entirely outside the castes. The latter are called desperadoes, whether they speak the tongue of the Aryans or of the non-Aryans.

About women, the Shastras say that they are indeed noble and worthy of respect. They are the light in the homes and they are to bring forth the progeny. They are each a representation of Goddess Lakshmi.

"Prajanartham Mahabhaga Pujarha
Grihadiptaya
Striya Sriyascha Gehesu NaBisesosti
Kaschana
(Manu in Dharma Siddhanta 9)

Woman is to be cared for by the father in childhood, by the husband in youth and by the sons in old age. She is to follow the same Brata as her husband. She is to keep the household in order and take care of the cash. She is to look after the conforts of her father-in-law and her mother-in-law and other elders. And she is to help her husband with the worship of gods and service to guests. It should be far from her to tame her husband by clandestime methods. It is not for her to stir out of house on idle visits. While the husband is abroad, the wife should avoid toilet. And when he dies, she must observe celibacy. She must think him a god, wheather he is perverted or panperised. And deeds that might displease him, she must meticulously avoid. His death may go hard with her, but she must take a vow of celibay and refuse to think of other men. (Dharma Siddhanta).

And so we find distinct indication in

the Shastras to all the castes, both pure and promiscuous, and to all Hindu women as to how they are to move towards self-realisation. Whoever follows the road shown by the Shastras will find himself nearing the land of bliss.

Then we come to the Ashramas.

The Ashrama of Brahmacharya: The Brahmachari is every morning and evening to throw consecrated faggot at the holy flame. He should beg for alms and bring it to his Guru, and should partake of it with his permission; Meat and honey he must avoid. Scents and garlands and sandals and Umbrellas are for him a taboo. He should not sleep by day, nor beat drums. Brushing of teeth, use of oil, music and dancing, playing at dice, slandering of others, company of women, servitude to lower castes, exultancy and cowardice are all tabooed. He must curb his cravings, as he must curb his wrath and greed and attachment. He must subdue his sensual impulses

He must obey his Guru, and wear his hair long and avoid sleeping on cots. He must not go to bed before his Guru, nor get up after he does. When the Guru stands up, the Brahmachari must also stand up. When the Guru moves, he must come after. When the Guru lies, he must attend on him. And when the Guru wishes to teach, he must come and hear him. He must have three baths a day and say his prayers morning and evening. After bath, he must offer appeasement to the gods and sages, and to his father, if he has lost him. He must fulfil the conditions and then read the Vedas. The Vedas and its six subsidiaries are to be read first. At the start, as at the close of classes, the Guru must be saluted duly. Man has three kinds of Guru : The father, the mother and the teacher. All of them must be respected and pleased. Whoever teaches Shastras, no matter how much, has to be respected as a Guru. Service to parents is every one's duty. Sandhya

and prayer is for all those who wear the sacred thread.
(Gautam. Manu, Basistha and Vishnu in Dharma—Siddhanta).

Full of knowledge of the Vedas, one emerges from the stage of Brahmacharya, and enters upon family life.

The family man should begin his life by marrying a suitable girl from outside his own Gotra and Prabar. Between husband and wife there ought to be a close understanding sweetened by love. Women in the home must be tenderly cared for. The father must look after his daughter, the brother after his sister, the husband after his wife, and there must be gifts of clothes and ornaments for the women. All this is bound to be conductive to the welfare of the home. When a respectable visitor comes, the master of the house should show him all courtesy and gratify him with pleasant manners. The family-man must have his bath and Sandhya and chantings.

He must avoid dissolute living, forbidden foods and drinks, taking a life, maligning friends and telling lies and such other things as militate against the Shastras.

Truth and non-violence must be properly understood before we can decide what is untruth and what is violence to the lower animals. Truth is not a mere statement of fact. It is in a very vital sense, an utterance that is fruitfull of good. And a sacrifice of lower animals at the altar of the gods does not connote voilence.

The family-man should not exhibit his wealth or poverty or penance or charity; nor should he disclose his humiliations or his longevity. He may speak of the gifts he receives, of the debt he repays or of the loan he gets. He may speak of his studies, of the disposal of his daughters, of the sins commited in secret, of the praises he wins. Gifts are worth while, when given to father, mother, Guru, friend, or to the poor and the helpless, to the weak and the high-souled.

Gifts are wasted, when given to the sinning, to quacks and gamblers, to flatterers and pilferers. He should not give away his all, when his children are there. He may not give away common property, things begged from others, things held as security or held in trust, inherited estates and religious establishments.

He must have his daily bits of charity. On special occasions the gift of cows means a large measure of spiritual gain. If you nurse the tried or tend the sick or wash the feet of reverend men, or if you offer worship at the altar you get an equal measure of gain.

The five sacraments known as "Pancha Mahajajna" must be part of the family man's routine. They comprise the reading and the teaching of the Vedas, the sacred fire, the offering of food to the Almighty, chantings to appease the father if dead, and service to the guests.

These five, when accomplished, have

the effect of liquidating the sins produced by the unavoidable violence done to small insects. Many indeed are burnt up in cooking stove, many are squeezed and smashed in various ways. But even this unintentional violence adds to our junkpile of sins.

Among the dependants must be counted one's parents and wife and children and the sheltered, and in a sense, the guests, too. One's kinsmen and friends may also be counted as such. The family man has to look after them and he is dammed if he won't care to. But if he is too poor for all that, he must at least practise truth and sincerity, be a loving husband and a good father, and read the Vedas. That he must serve his parents need hardly be mention.

The inmates of the house should dine after the guests, except for the maidens and ew brides and the sick and such women as are carrying.

T r family man should follow the same rules of conduct, except that he

may not read the Vedas. In carrying out the five Sacraments he is to say "Namas." The Sradh ceremony comes in for him just as it does for the higher castes

Banaprastha—the third stage. The family man gets on in years and finds grand-children around him. And now is the time to enter upon the third stage. The wife may stay on at home or may follow the husband into the forest. He must avoid the villages and wear the bark or deerskin and spare the razor. He must pick such fruit and Nature gives and it is no offence for him so to pick, because it is a privilege peculiar to infirmity. He must cultivate forgiveness and sex-sublimation. And to guests that may come to his door he must render such hospitality as he can by begging.

Three baths and the five sacraments are part of his daily routine. He may indulge his charity but he must abstain from taking fees. Begging at five houses

s permissible, if the alms may be consumed as diet.

(Vasistha, Gautam and Manu in Dharma-siddhanta).

When the third stage expires, he is to enter upon complete renunciation : Sannyasa. As he enters, he must give "Abhoy Dakshina" to all the living world. And all his labour must be consecrated. Only the Vedas are not to be so treated. He must live alone and go deep into self-contemplation ; wear no hair on his crown and allow no attachment to grow ; lead a very clean life and live by begging at seven houses in the afternoon. There should be no storing up against the future, and no lying except on the floor, no long sojourn at any place. No village should he choose for residence. He may put up in a temple or in a forsaken house or under the shade of a tree at the edge of a village. He must not exert himself for money or position. His meals must be scanty and

his abode must be secluded, so that he may be the better able to control his sensual functions. He should avoid lecturing on the Shastras and attracting disciples. He should think of recurring birth, of life in hell, of the recession of good and accession of evil, of desease, infirmity and death, and put them all down to crimes against God and man. He must have recourse to Yoga for a direct experience of the Absolute.

Manu, Basistha and Daksha in
Dharma-siddhanta

These, then are the codes for the four stages of life.

When Sattwa preponderates, the world accepts the Varnashram system. And when Rajas preponderates this system declines. Finally, when Tamas rules the world the system cracks up hopelessly. In the last phase of Kali, it will completely crumble. And inevitably the Lord will re-incarnate Himself to set it up again. The span of Kali is 432000 years. But Kali is now

only 5050 years old. So the end of the system is far, far away.

Why should such a great thing perish?

Whatever is manifest is subject to birth, growth and decay. Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas are integrated into the Divine Mother, and She is ever in flux. The only changeless Thesis, above all dialectics, is the absoltue Brahma—The Eternal Soul.

While the three forces are perfectly balanced, there is no manifest world. When Sattwa gains the upper hand, peace reigns and Varnashrama prevails. And all men and women strive towards God along prescribed roads.

But Sattwa declines and Rajas rises, and the militant tribes, children of Rajas, start hammering at the Edifice of Varnashrama. The Lord then is compelled to act, and He comes and lays Rajas low and bolstering up Sattwa, He builds anew the noble Edifice.

This has happened time and again.

The power-puffed Hiranyakasipu hurled his sword at Varnashrama And the Lord came as Narasimha and finished him and made the world safe for Varnashrama.

The Lord incarnated Himself as Bamana to restore the gods to their rightful place. And, again, when king Bena was knocking heavily at Varnashrama the Lord had him destroyed by the Brahmins, and out He came as Prithu from the king's lifeless frame As Parasuram, He extirpated the martail races 21 times over, and thus accomplished the preponderance af Sattwa.

But Rajas rose again, and Ravana and his kind directed their assault at Varnashrama. And so the Lord had again to come down as Rama in order to quell the rising tide of Rajas and to reestablish the sovereignty of Sattwa.

Time passed and Rajas again came to Rule Supreme, and King Kansa and his kind released their broadsides on Varnashrama And inevitably our merciful Lord

came as Krishna and saved our religion.

If we look through the annals of this land—India, we find that whenever the forces of evil have gained the upper hand, they have outraged our Shastars and our Brahmins ond our cows. Whenever their iniquities have become unbearable, the gracious Lord has intervened and restored the supremacy of Varnashrama.

Following Krishna's epoch, Varnashrama was again undermined, but not by the power of Rajas. This time Sattwa itself degenerated and became enamoured of Rajas. The Brahmin gave up his asceticism and self-denial, and ran after the good things of the world. He forgot his ideals and what sacrificial rites he carried out were for material gain. Even in Krishna's time Dronacharya and other Brahmins had become servitors of the Kshatriyas. As time passed, their earthly cravings grew and they declined of course, And so the Lord incarnated Himself as the

Buddha and preached the ideal of renuciation. The reverend Tarkaratna Mahasai, in an impressive review of Buddhism and its impact on Varnashrama, says :—

"If a revolution overtakes the thought-world, it is bound to overtake the material world also. Before Islamic conquest, India was free, no doubt, but inside that political freedom there was a distinct climbdown in religious freedom. After the Buddha's passing away, his followers preached renuciation right and left, and the people were caught in the new current. And the result was that Varnashrama tottered and trembled. Men and women all over the land became victims of high-pressure Buddhist proselylizing, and embraced monastic life in spite of powerful natural cravings. The upsurge of the new movement knocked down Varnashrama, and chaos ruled. The forcible suppression of natural impulses produced an awful reaction.

The cult of non-violence bred in the people a strange tameness and meekness and an anti-thesis of gallantry. Revelries of love filled the land. And aged nuns acted as messengers between lovers. "Brihat Samhita" belonged to the 6th century A. D. India was in those days wallowing in luxury, as is evident from the fact that 74000 kinds of cosmetics were then in the market. The "Dasakumar Charit', relates scandals belonging to that period. Banavatta's Harsha-charit", written in the 7th Century describes the Brahmin dandies of those times. Luxury and laxity thus made the land vulnerable to Islamic assaults. Providence could not ordain otherwise.

So the land became politically enslaved. But the people, in reaction, rallied around Varnashrama, and the words of the sages were carefully compiled and circulated. And thus people began to come into their own in spite of foreign masters. The glorious tenets of Hinduism had been proc-

laimed by the Puranas and Shastras, but they had all been lost in the new upsurge of Buddhism. These tenets were now salvaged and applied to the defence of Hindudom".

Lord Sankaracharya proclaimed to the people the teachings of the Vedas and re-established Varnashrama. And on the top of that, he proclaimed his cult of non-dualism.

But after his passing away, his non-dualism came to be misconstrued. His followers were full of lofty phrases, but they indulged their evil propensities And at this crisis, Jamunacharya proclaimed his cult of devotion, and his disciple Ramanuja came out with his Realistic Non dualism, and swept the land with new powerful currents of devotion.

In this blessed land—India, divine tenets have been preached by a galaxy of saints, such as Maddhwacharya, Balla-

bhacharya Madhabendra Puri, Iswar Puri, Adwaitacharya, Sri Chaitanya, Nityananda and yet others. Bhaskarananda Swami and Trailanga Swami lived and worked, not very long ago, for the propagation of the Vedas and for the promotion of saintliness in India. Both demonstrated great Yogic powers, and both were insistent that the Shastras of the Vedic Aryans were infallible.

And yet for all the did, the declining tide continued to ebb away. The Brahmin forgot his ideal of living for others and began to live for himself. In Sri Chaitanya's time two prominent Brahmins, Rup and Sanatan, were high up in office under Moslem rule. Men thirsted more and more for money, and so they were driven more and more into servitude. The descendants of the Vadic Aryans seemed entirely to forget the old dictum—"Don't learn the language of the Yabana, nor enter the temple of the Jainas." They learnt Urdu

and got posts under alien masters and drove their country more and more into enslavement. The summit of the Hindu Community plumped for Servitude and so the rest of the community followed suit. India sank hopelessly into the depths of degradation.

The advent of saints from time to time helped of course those who chose renunciation. But the bulk of the people with their earthly cravings failed to follow the saints.

After the Moguls, came the English into India, as our new masters, and they organised our education on English lines. And the self-seeking Hindus went heart and soul into learning English in the hope of finding good careers. And of course they were not disappointed. In the early days of British rule in India, an ounce of English fetched a pound of gold. Sanskrit, therefore, was put off the ground by its powerful new rival, and an alien culture

was installed at every shrine. The old principles of conduct and the old Values began to wither. And in the course of three or four generations, the children of this soil, India, lost their distinction and became hopelessly mixed up.

My own great grandfather, for instance, was marked by such a piousness and regard for the Shastras as was not found in my grandfather. The latter had chosen service as a career, but still he had some regard for the Shastras and for his ritual. His son had less of that regard, and his grandsons fell further back. This progressive deterioration of the religious temperment is true of almost every other Hindu family.

Modern school boys seen fret and fume at the excesses of the Brahmins, and they rush into print in order to reach a wider public. They are out to abolish untouchability and they declare: "Let us come and dine with the pariahs." Gracious goodness,

that sort of indiscriminate dining is also done by the dogs in the streets! Dining that way may delight those who think of nothing but eating. But is there nothing but eating in this wide, wide world? We are the children of the sages. Must we behave like mere gourmands? It is easy to declare for mass-dining. But is it so very easy to be scrupulous about dining? It would seem that this unwholesome tendency towards mass-dining is a recent growth fostered by an exotic system of education. In modern school all the castes are huddled up, and purity is given the go-by; and boys brought up in such noxious environs, inevitably develop daredevil ways. The father gets his son schooled for a career, but he naver cares for religion. The father consigns his religious duties to oblivion, and the son, emulating his father, runs after false ideals. Our westernised schools have cut across our caste-distinctions and swept away caste-conscious-

ness ; and through them foreign ideas have insidiously wrought a change in our outlook. Boys may fumble when asked the names of their grandparents. But they will promptly tell you how Nepoleon fell at Waterloo, why the Greeks lost at Thermopylae and won at Marathon. They know all about the wits of western pirates. They know how Romeo loved and Juliet smiled.

And thus their whole outlook is shaped on western models, and they become critical of Indian ways They say that the Brahmins are self-centred, that caste-system is a canker, that Indian women are bond-slaves, that the widow's celibacy is a vulgar contrivance of the Brahmins. They insinuate that the Shastras are the arsenal of the top-caste, that the Puranas came from self-seeking pundits, that the Vedas are chanted by the rustics. Such adverse notions grow upon them as they grow, and become part of their mental make-up. They see the land overgrown with weeds and they cry

for weeding them out. They value temporal pleasures only and refuse to burn incense at antiquated shrines.

I would concede, however, that there are many amongst us who, in spite of their education of English have retained their faith in Hindu ritual and Shastras. That may be put down to their pious and God-fearing parents. All their pursuit of western culture could not drag them into the social chaos, because their hearts belonged to Hinduism.

As the Englishmen came into India, some of our countrymen imbibed their ideas and thought of curing our national maladies with occidental nostrums. They saw that a virile race with its dynamic ways was an example worth our emulation. They saw that the English had no caste-divisions, no child-marriage, no ban on women's education, no restraint on their liberty, no inequality of rights between the two sexes. They saw that English life wes nowhere cramped by

absurd taboos.

And having seen all that, they felt persuaded that India would go to the wall unless she adopted English methods and ideals. And having so felt, they changed over to European clothes and European dishes,—and transferred all their affections from dark-haired Indian brunettes to auburn-haired blondes hailing from England !

In their reformist zeal they said, "Think no more of caste, no more of child-marriage. Set your women free, and shed your puritanism. Throw your Shastras overboard, and come out into freedom." Phrases like these began to act on our body politic.

And so most of our countrymen chucked aside their time honoured Shastras and ran after temporal self-fulfilment. Men of learning, whether in English or in Sanskrit prized pleasure-seeking instead of plain living. And so-called Pandits twisted the Shastras to justify their voluptuous

orgies and thus paved the way to the blazes.

The 'Sanatana Dharma' in practice had become very faulty indeed. Put instead of trying to remove the defects, the reformers wanted to demolish the whole structure of society. The child-widows by new lagislation were allowed to marry again, and the purpose of that legislation was to prevent social scandals. It seemed to be a humanist legislation. But in course of time women's morals slackened as their liberty increased, and this laxity developed dynamically with social progress !

Let me AVER, however, that this is the land of Sitas and Savitris, and this land shall not be the theatre of mad revelries. Those who indulge in them shall remain outcastes.

Reformist persuasions, marked by an affected sympathy for Hindudom, seek to liquidate the patient in the name of curing the disease. Reformers come forward with their programs and profess to be

well-meaning Hindus, but they are in most cases designing atheists masquerading as full-blown progrssivists.

Our Shastras declare, and our saints affirm that the goal of human life is a union with God. And they point to the road—that of renunciation. When the individuals have yet to conquer their sensual cravings, renunciation is to be reached by degrees. Sooner or later, therefore, renunciation comes, for God is reached no other way. You may believe is sensual gratification, but there is nothing for you in the end except sorrows and tears.

Our cup of misery seems to be full today. Who can assuage the anguish of our Souls? We mocked our Shastras, and the Shastras are avenging themselves. Let us return to the path shown by them and regain our peace. Our Shastras are the fountain head of peace. They insist everywhere on ideals above the material plane, and a faithful interpretation of them

can never suggest an emphasis on material values. So-called Saints, full of philosophy, may refuse to believe in self-denial, and may twist the Shastras to justify their refusal. But the hallmark of Saintliness is an insistence on self-denial. Let not false saints come and confound our wits. We must look for guidance, now as before, to our Shastras and to austere, self-denying Brahmins expounding the Shastras. If we care to seek the guidance of such Sanatanist Brahmins we shall be the better for the seeking ; for through them we are bound to win our desiderata: "Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha."

Come away, brothers and sisters, from your voluptuous but tormenting revelries. Come back to your quiet sanctums, your old altars, your sublime meditations, your self-denying ordinances.

Heed not the babblers that mock at our tradition. To the sinister tide oppose the strength of your devotion to your

parents, your gods, and your Shastras. Try it and see how the dry depths of your heart are again filled with joy. Try it and you will find yourselves gliding nearer and nearer to the source of all bliss. With the presence of God pressing delightfully upon you, you will assuredly find that life is not a challenge but a song.

If you would see the light that never was on land or sea, follow your Shastras and make your life sublime. Your Shastras call you away from earthly pleasures because they are cramped by earthly limits. The Shastras can show you, if you care to love them, that you are indeed too big for the limits, The more you follow them, the more you experience of release from the limits, a flight into a new freedom.

What I say here is not gleaned from the books but from my personal experience. Hold fast, then, to the Shastras, and they shall not fail you.

I feel pity for those unfortunate souls

whose sport it is to denounce our Shastras in season and out of season. The flames they are lighting will inevitably consume them. And their anguish will take on a tongue and speak, perhaps, to you.

Come back, brothers, to your altar and your ritual, Come back, mothers and sisters, to your duties in the homes, your service to the guests, your devotion to the elders. your affections for the children. Forsake not your old sanctums of peace. Hear not the siren voice of the new age. New slogans seek to tempt you away from your homes. They seek to tempt you into a wilderness dark almost as hell.

And to those who honestly seek our country's good, I can only say that their ends will be best served by turning to the Shastras for guidance, and not by formulating new doctrines for the new age.

O Brahmins, you are born to shed light on the world. May you shine again in your pristine glory.

O my Shastras, you are too great for words of praise. I can only say that I adore you. I have not followed all your teachings, but in so far as I have followed them, I have felt blessed and ennobled. I have taken the vow to proclaim, until I die, that the SHASTRAS ARE DIVINE AND INFALLIBLE; THAT THOSE WHO FOLLOW THEM SHALL IN THE END FIND THEMSELVES RESTING ON THE BOSOM OF THE LORD.

Have mercy, O my Shastras, on all the misguided souls, Give them eyes that they may see you.

O my beloved Lord, I lay this little flower at your feet. Will You not accept it?

May it be Your pleasure, O Gracious Lord, to smile upon the tortured Souls, to give them eyes to see You and hearts to worship You. With such eyes and such hearts they shall soon be past all the bitterness of life.

Come down, Dearest, on this blessed soil of ours. Come again, as You have come before, to build anew our Edifice of Varnashrama.

At Your lotus-feet I bow myriads of times, millions of times.

ERRATA.

Page.	Line.	For.	Read.
1	9	his	His
2	10	splended	Splendid
5	21	Gouri	Gourir
6	16	[full stop after	Universe
7	9	wbirlpol	whirlpool
8	10	rifinement	refinement
8	19	SAHABRAKSHA	SAHASRAKSHA
8	21	TISTHATI	ATYATISTHAT
9	7	ia	is
9	9	eha	cha
10	4	Bidynto	Bidyuto
10	16	Know	Knows
11	5	[full stop after	don't
11	5	Vertics	Verities
11	10	Prajantya	Prajanti
11	17	Brahma bid	Brahmabid
12	4	Sarban	Sarbam
12	11	Brihadaranayaka	Brihadaranyaka
12	22	th	the
14	1	he	He
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„	9	fonr	four
„	10	Ethic	Ethics
„	12	purana	Purana
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„	16	purana	Purana

Page.	Line.	For	Read.
15	23	ot	of
16	2	Swabarna srama	Swabarnashrama
16	3	Swddha	Suddha
16	4	Tat Mupattasaihana	Tatpurvam Upattasadhana
17	6	Avatice	Avarice
"	12	Karam	Karma
"	17	[delete comma (') after Karma	
"	14	Concentration···etc.	Concentration, sensual, control, austerity, cleanliness, forgiveness ···etc,
19	8	fiishermen	fishermen
20	7	Conforts	comforts
20	17	whether	whether
20	17	panperised	pamperised
21	13	[full stop in place of comma	after permission
21	15	Umbrellas	umbrellas
21	20	[delete full stop after all	
24	10	fruitfull	fruitful
25	12	tried	tired
26	12	dammed	damned
26	22	T r	The Sudra
27	13	fruit and	fruit as
29	7	desease	disease
31	11	[full stop after lifeless frame	
21	12	martail	martial
21	13	af	of
32	5	Shastars	Shastras
32	6	ond	and
32	22	[full stop after of course in place	of comma

Page.	Line.	For.	Read.
33	1	renuciation	renunciation
„	12	renuciation	renunciation
„	17	proselylizing	proselytizing
34	3	anti hesis	antithesis
36	4	Traijanga	Trailanga,
„	11	all the did	all they did
„	20	Vadic	Vedic
„	„	e tirely	entirely
38	16	temperment	temperament
„	18	Seen	Seem to
39	„	naver	never
40	9	konw	know
„	10	Outlcok	outlook
„	17	thc	the
41	23	wes	was
43	3	Put	B[illegible]
„	7	lagislation	legislation
„	23	programs	programmes
44	3	progrssivists	progressivists
„	8	c nquer	conquer
„	12	believe is	believe in
„	21	fountain head	fountainhead
47	7	[full stop after ritual in place of comma	
48	13	[full stop after souls in place of comma	

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